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### Southern Educator

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GEORGIA  
SOUTHERN  
UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
*Reflective Educators for Diverse Learners*

## Southern Educator

June 27, 2012

Volume 1 Issue 6

### Upcoming Events

- June 28 Graduate Research Workshop
- August 15 COE Fall Faculty & Staff Meeting
- Sept. 18 STEM Career Fair
- Sept. 14 Rural Based HIV Education & Training

[More announcements.](#)

### Faculty News

**Dr. Charles Hodges**, assistant professor in Instructional Technology, and **M.Ed. student S. Forrest Cowan**, published "Preservice teachers' views of instructor presence in online courses," in the *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education*. The paper was recognized as the "**Best Professional Paper**" from the 2012 meeting of the Eastern Educational Research Association.



### COE Alumni: Tell Us Your "First Day" Stories

COE alumni teach, lead and serve throughout Georgia and across the nation. Whether you've been in your position for many years or just a few, you probably remember something about your first day at work as an educator. Share your story with new COE alums as they embark on their careers by posting on COE's [facebook](#) page. You can also send your story to *Southern Educator* at [collegeofed@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:collegeofed@georgiasouthern.edu)

We'll include as many of your stories as we can in upcoming issues.

### Alumna Earns Top Principal in State

#### ***Second year in a row COE alums earn honor***

Dr. Debbie Rodriguez, COE alumna and principal of Taylors Creek Elementary School in Liberty County, GA, has been named the 2012 National Distinguished Principal for the state by the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the U.S. Department of Education. Rodriguez joins COE alumnus Dr. Eddie Pollard who received the honor in 2011. Pollard, also a member of COE's Board of Advisors, is principal of Tyrone Elementary School in Fayette County.



Rodriguez has served as principal of Taylors Creek for 15 years. Under her leadership, the school was selected as a "model" school by the Georgia Partnership of Excellence in Education. Taylors Creek has also been named as a Distinguished Title 1 School for the past nine years. Rodriguez earned her undergraduate and graduate degrees at Georgia Southern and her doctorate from the University of Sarasota.

**Dr. Eric Landers**, assistant professor in Teaching and Learning, published "Including students with severe disabilities in school-wide positive behavior interventions and supports: perceptions of state trainers," in *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*.

**Dr. Robert Lake**, assistant professor in Curriculum, Foundations and Reading, published a book *Vygotsky on Education Primer*, Peter Lang International Academic Publishers. **Curriculum, Foundations and Reading Graduate student Dana McCullough** published "Wear Red October 4th to Honor Henrietta Lacks Day" on the Random House webpage, <http://rhimagazine.com>.

**Dr. Christine Draper**, assistant professor, and **Dr. Michelle Reidel**, associate professor, both in Teaching and Learning, are conducting a workshop for the National Civil War Institute in Charleston, SC, on "Understanding the Civil War Through Graphic Novels."

**Dr. Martha Schriver**, professor in Teaching and Learning, is participating in a Teacher Quality workshop, the St. Catherine's Project, working with scientists on turtle nests and developing lessons plans from the experience. Dr. Schriver is traveling to Costa Rica for a National Science Teachers Association grant.



A clinical supervisor checking the day's sessions.

## Clinical Supervisors Attend CAMP

More than 125 classroom teachers from COE partner schools representing six school systems honed their skills and shared experiences as clinical supervisors for COE teacher candidates in a day-long "camp" at Nessmith Lane Continuing Education Conference Center last week. CAMP is an acronym for "coaching, assessing, mentoring and preparing," four critical components of the job of a clinical supervisor.

According to Pat Parsons, Director of Field Experiences and Partnerships, classroom teachers who serve as clinical supervisors are a special group of educators. "Our clinical supervisors tend to be the exemplary teachers and the most dedicated," Parsons said. "They want to help mentor our teacher candidates to become the best and most effective teachers they can be during those first critical years in the classroom." [Read more about this summer's Clinical CAMP.](#)

## COE SOARs This Summer

Summer is one of the busiest times of the year for COE's Student Success Center (SSC) as eager new students fill Georgia Southern's campus for SOAR - Southern's Orientation, Advisement and Registration. SSC staff will help approximately 225 new COE freshmen and transfer students this summer get ready for their first day of classes August 20.



Left: The COE SOAR Team (seated, l-r) Earnestine Burns, Rebecca Avant; (standing l-r) Caroline McLean, Chris Thompson and Briana Boyd. Right: Chris Thompson begins a presentation to eager freshmen.

See Our New *Wall of Honor* webpage.



Now it's even easier to donate to COE!

## Educators Learn Positive Behavior Framework at COE Conference

COE's second annual Southeast Conference on Positive Behavior Interventions and Support had more than a 50 percent increase in the number of participants, drawing educators nationally and internationally. "The feedback we received pertaining to the conference's practicality and usefulness to everyday professionals was tremendous," said Dr. Eric Landers, assistant professor in Teaching and Learning and the conference director. "The goal of the conference is to ensure that every educator leaves every session with materials to take back to their classrooms," he continued, what he terms the "Conference to Classroom Connection." The conference was held in Savannah, GA, June 4 and 5. [Click here for more information on the PBIS conference.](#)

## ALUMNI NEWS

### 1970-79

**Susan Crescentini** ('74 B.S.Ed.) is working on a project in Hillsborough County, FL, called Math at the Mall. Elementary students from all over Hillsborough County are invited to the mall one day to participate in math activities that are provided by mall stores and by several county schools.

**William Clifton** ('75 B.S.Ed. Art Education) retired at the end of the 2011-2012 school year after 34 years as an elementary school visual arts teacher for Beaufort County Schools in Beaufort, SC. He plans to start a kayak fishing business and continue volunteering with Beaufort Water Search and Rescue.

**Connie Williams** ('77 M.Ed. Business Education) is retired and living in Myrtle Beach, SC, and in Richmond, VA. She's loving life and spending lots of time at the beach and shagging!

**Jeanne Smith** ('79 Ed.S. School Psychology) works as a school psychologist in Bulloch County, GA. She enjoys staying involved in the local chapter of the council for Exceptional Children and Special Olympics. Her husband, Danny, and mother-in-law are GSU alums as is Jeanne's oldest daughter. Her younger daughter is an incoming freshman. (M.Ed. School Psychology)

### 1980-89

**Vickie Smith** ('81 B.S.Ed. Early Childhood) is working at Harris House Assisted Living in Fitzgerald, GA.

### 1990-99

**Suzanne Tyson** ('90 Ed.S. Counseling) just retired after 29 years of working in public education in Georgia. She taught high school English in Emanuel County and Candler County for 24 years, finishing her career as Senior English teacher at Metter High. (M.Ed. English)

**Gene Eden** ('93 Ed.S. Counselor Education) retired from secondary public education after 32 years, the last 28 at Southeast Bulloch High School in Brooklet, GA, as a school counselor. He is currently employed with the Student Disability Resource Center at Georgia Southern as a disability specialist. (M.Ed. Counselor Education, B.S.Ed. Social Science)

**MaryDay Widner** ('93 B.S.Ed.) has three daughters and five grandchildren. She works for Stephens County Schools in Toccoa, GA, and was recently named the Special Education Director for Stephens County Schools.

**Ashley James** ('95 M.Ed. Higher Ed) is working as an academic advisor, assisting adult learners with admissions, financial aid, course transfer and course selection and credit by examination for Columbia College of Missouri, Ft. Stewart Campus in Ft. Stewart, GA.

**David Avery** ('97 Ed.S. School Leadership) retired this June as principal of Treutlen Middle/High School (2004-2012). He was principal of Treutlen Middle School from 1998-2004. (M.Ed. '90, B.S.Ed. '82)

**Lummie Harris** ('98 B.S.Ed. Secondary Education English) was recently named the DeKalb Library Media Specialist of the Year. She is the Library Media Specialist at Miller Grove Middle School in DeKalb County.

**Mike Woodward** ('98 M.Ed. Leadership) is the athletic director for Forsyth Central High School in Cumming, GA. In 2009 he was the Georgia State Athletic Director of the Year.

**2000-09**

**Sandy Watson** ('02 Ed.D. Curriculum Studies, Math, Science, Technology) was just promoted to full professor science education at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. She is the co-director of UTeachChattanooga and co-director of the Center for Leadership in STEM Education. (M.Ed.)

**Krystle White** ('05 B.S.Ed. Early Childhood) is working living in Saint Johns, Florida.

Peter Johnston ('09 B.S.Ed. Early Childhood) is working as the Children's Pastor at Hampton First Baptist Church in Hampton, GA.

**Wayne Partridge** ('09 Ed.D. Curriculum Studies) has been accepted into Oxford University to complete his second doctorate.

Alumni, stay connected...fill out our [Alumni Survey](#) today.



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